

Recommendation from the Affiliations Committee to the Board of Trustees of the Wikimedia Foundation regarding a revised Affiliate-Selected Board Seats (ASBS) process

Introduction

Per the Board’s request, the Affiliations Committee has prepared a recommendation for a revised Affiliate-Selected Board Seats (ASBS) process that would include participation by all affiliates (including Chapters, Thematic Organisations, and User Groups). This recommendation takes the form of eight recommended provisions, which are contained in this document.¹

In formulating its recommendations, the Committee considered and attempted to balance a number of competing factors, including the Board’s stated intent to make the ASBS process more inclusive for all types of affiliates as well as a desire to minimize the inter-affiliate conflict emerging as a result of the new process. Consequently, the recommendations aim to open the process to an equitable degree of participation by all affiliates while simultaneously ensuring that no single category of affiliates will come to dominate the process by sheer force of numbers.

¹ The text of this document uses the term “ASBS election” to refer to a formal vote by representatives of Wikimedia affiliates on individual candidates who may thereafter be eligible for appointment to the Board of Trustees. The Affiliations Committee understands that the Board legally appoints its own members, and the use of the term “election” should not be interpreted as a recommendation that this methodology be altered.

Affiliate Eligibility

The Affiliations Committee recommends three provisions regarding affiliates' eligibility to participate as voters in the ASBS election process:

Affiliate Eligibility Requirements

All affiliates must meet the following requirements to participate in the ASBS election:

- (a) The affiliate must be in compliance with its affiliate agreement and any grant agreement(s) with the Wikimedia Foundation; and
- (b) The affiliate must have submitted at least one activity report during the year prior to the beginning of the election. The report must describe at least one substantive programmatic activity which was carried out by the affiliate.

Affiliate Participation Statement

Each affiliate that wishes to participate in the ASBS election must submit a statement that defines the following:

- (a) A process that the affiliate will use to determine its vote(s); and
- (b) The identity of the person or persons who will cast the vote(s) on behalf of the affiliate.

For Chapters, Thematic Organisations, and incorporated User Groups, the statement must be signed by an officer of the affiliate; for unincorporated User Groups, the statement must be signed by both primary contacts. Statements must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of the ASBS election.

Affiliate Eligibility Determination

60 days prior to the beginning of the ASBS election, the Election Committee will publish an initial list of eligible affiliates. For affiliates which are not eligible, the committee will state the reason(s) for ineligibility.

30 days prior to the beginning of the ASBS election, the Election Committee will publish the final list of eligible affiliates. For affiliates which are not eligible, the committee will state the reason(s) for ineligibility.

Candidate Eligibility

The Affiliations Committee recommends three provisions regarding individuals' eligibility to participate as candidates in the ASBS election:

Candidate Eligibility Requirements

Candidates in the ASBS election must meet the eligibility requirements set out for the most recent election for community-selected board seats.

Candidate Endorsement Requirements²

Any person who wishes to stand as a candidate in the ASBS election must obtain a statement of endorsement from

(a) at least one Chapter or Thematic Organisation; and

(b) at least one User Group.

Candidate Eligibility Determination

30 days prior to the beginning of the ASBS election, the Election Committee will publish a list of eligible candidates. For candidates determined not to be eligible, the committee will state the reason(s) for ineligibility.

Election Mechanics

The Affiliations Committee recommends two provisions regarding the voting mechanism used for the ASBS election:

Voting Method

The ASBS election will use a single transferable vote with droop quota.

² The Committee considered several alternative provisions, including requiring endorsement by any single affiliate or dispensing with endorsements altogether. However, the Committee believes that a dual endorsement requirement will most effectively ensure that candidates do not run on a platform of active hostility to any particular category of affiliates.

Allocation of Votes³

One seat on the board will be elected by a vote of eligible Chapters and Thematic Organisations. Each Chapter or Thematic Organisation will have one vote, which they may cast for any eligible candidate. The candidate receiving the highest voting result, as calculated using the selected voting method, will be nominated for appointment to the seat.

One seat on the board will be elected by a vote of eligible User Groups. Each User Group will have one vote, which they may cast for any eligible candidate. The candidate receiving the highest voting result, as calculated using the selected voting method, will be nominated for appointment to the seat. If the first-choice candidate has already been nominated as a result of the chapter and Thematic Organisation vote, the second-choice candidate will be nominated instead.

³ The Committee considered an alternative provision which would proportionately allocate votes from a single pool to affiliates according to type, but felt that this system would be too unwieldy.